Shortfall in production of Vanaspati

644. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is true that the production of vanaspati is coming down for the last few years;

(b) if so, the reasons for such decline in production of vanaspati;

(c) whether the Indian Vanaspati Producers Association had represented for excise duty exemption; and

(d) if so, the amount of customs duty exemption sought by them and the steps taken by the Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) According to information available, the indigenous production of Vanaspati in the country during the last five years has been as under:

Year	Production of Vanaspati
	(In lakh MT)
1995-96	9.%
1996-97	10.40
1997-98	10.12
1998-99	13.41
1999-2000	13.89

(c) No such representation regarding excise duty exemption has recently been received from the Indian Vanaspati Producers Association.

(d) One of the suggestion given by Indian Vanaspati Producers Association in this regard is to retionalize the duty structure on import of crude vegetable oils by imposing a uniform duty rale of 55% for the import of these oils by the Vanaspati Industry and removing the present distinction between the sick and non-sick units.

vide Notification No. 44/2001-Customs dated 26.4.2001 issued by the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, entries relating to concessional rate of customs duty @ 55% on CPO for sick vanaspati units were omitted.

Now, there is a uniform rate of duty of 75% on CPO for all the vanaspati units, whether sick or otherwise.

Fall in coconut production due to mites

645. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that coconut production has fallen due to prevalence of mite disease in Southern States of the country;

(b) if so, what is total production of coconut at present; and

(c) the State-wise details of production of coconut both prior to mite disease and after mite disease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) As per the latest available statistics for the year 1999-2000, the total production of coconuts in four Southern States of Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, has increased to 11,111 million nuts from 10,777 million nuts in 1998-99. The total estimated production of coconuts in the country during 1999-2000 is 12,251.6 million nuts.

(c) The incidence of eriophyid mite of coconuts was first noticed in 1998. The State-wise production of coconut for the year 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 is given below:—

(million nuts)

	States 2	1997-98 3	1998-99 4	1999-2000 5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	815.0	698.1	1051.8
2.	Assam	126.9	149.9	150.1
3.	Goa	120.9	121.0	121.6
4.	Kamataka	1550.4	1611.5	1670.3
5.	Kerala	5911.0	5132.0	5167.0
6.	Maharashtra	226.8	220.9	226.7
7.	Orissa	413.4	795.1	163.3
8.	Tamil Nadu	3096.7	3335.3	3222.0
9.	Tripura	6.1	7.5	7.5
10.	West Bengal	306.2	318.2	324.3